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of. I commit to you my time, my energy, my skills and experience in giving and guiding Nebraska's policy on education. With your help and support I will, as Abraham Lincoln said, do the very best I know how and the very best I can. Thank you for your consideration, and I would appreciate your support.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. Senator Raikes.

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you. Mr. President and members of the Legislature, please consider me a nominee for Chair of the Education Committee. The reason I seek this position is that I want to help. I know that this motive doesn't distinguish me from you. If...you too want to help, or you wouldn't be here. I'm grateful to my constituents for the opportunity to serve in the Legislature. I'm asking you to extend my opportunity to serve by granting me this additional responsibility. What can you expect if I am given this opportunity? Well, first, for a disturbingly large number of you, a main advantage would be that I would no longer have authority to determine whether your travel requests are approved. (Laughter) Some of you I am sure, in an effort to describe me as appropriately fiscally conservative, instead used words like "cheap" and "stingy". But, second, and hopefully more important, you could expect me to try to help fashion policies that are broadly supported and serve our long-term best interest. I don't want to deny that I have certain biases regarding state policy toward education. Among these are a preference for local control coupled with local effort, equalization in the distribution of state aid, public school funding, and a narrow focus on those areas where state involvement is essential with the goal of achieving excellence. I can promise, however, that I will consider views different than mind and, in fact, represent those views if they are the consensus of the committee. My goal would be to arrive at the best policy we can while weighting my own views only as heavily as those of my colleagues. I have been in the Legislature for just over three sessions. Till recently, that was a modest amount of experience. Now it's about half a career, but that gets us into a different area. I've been on Education Committee all that time and one area of focus for me has been the state aid formula and I thought now would be a good time to delve into some of the intricacies...no, not really. I